



“When I first came to the farm I saw rescue horses that had been brutally broken, physically, emotionally and spiritually just as I was when I came into treatment. I look at these horses and I am in awe of their will to live in spite of how they have been treated. They don’t give up on themselves like many of us addicts do. Like the horses, we can be provided with food, water and shelter. But without that hunger to actually live and believe in ourselves, we won’t make it. These horses are a true inspiration to me.”

Juliet B.

“When you’re dealing with the kind of stuff that we have to go thru in treatment, you need the kind of serenity that you can only get from animals like these”.

Richard K.

“After being in and out of treatment centers for the last 30 years, I finally got it. If you can open yourself up to the horses, you’ve opened yourself up to change, and you don’t have to wait till you’re 50 years old, like me, to end the pain and misery”.

Michael F.

Dr. Blair Barone-Rice

Licensed Psychologist
Clinical Director

A former Associate Professor and Senior Psychologist at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Barone has over 25 years’ experience working in recovery and animal assisted therapy. She knows from experience the transformative growth that can happen when you open your mind and heart to a horse. With her herd of rescue horses and other farm animals, at the barn named after her beloved horse, Lucky, Dr. Barone welcomes clients from treatment centers across South Florida to begin their own journey of self-discovery.

Elizabeth Hibshman

Group Facilitator
Program Coordinator

Elizabeth “Libby” joined The Lucky Horse Sanctuary in 2017. As a former Special Education Teaching Assistant, Libby’s recovery journey brought her to South Florida. It was here she personally experienced the benefits of equine therapy. Having suffered with her own mental health issues as well as addiction, with love, humor and grace.



Our Mission is to provide trauma specific animal assisted mental health counseling services to those suffering from traumatic related experiences.

Our Programs:

The Therapeutic Farm:

Offering integrative Animal Assisted Experiential Psychotherapy Group for children, adolescent & adults in Broward and Palm Beach County

Horse Whisper Kids:

Offering Animal Assisted Wellness & Educational activities to youth



The Lucky Horse Sanctuary

Coconut Creek, FL 33073

By Appointment Only

www.theluckyhorsesanctuary.org

561 860 1404

Animal Assisted Therapy

Horses are mystical animals and people have sought out relationships with horses since they first laid eyes on them.

Although riding horses can be exhilarating, there's something even more profound that draws people and horses together simply standing side by side. Animal-Assisted therapy has long been recognized as therapeutic.

For people in recovery and those dealing with mental health issues a lasting impression is made when the one making it is several times your size.

Equine or Animal Assisted Psychotherapy has become a highly valued therapeutic modality in treatment centers around the world. Being an Experiential Therapy, therapy is put into action with the aid of horses. How a client relates to a horse is how the client relates to everyone and everything in the client's life. Through meaningful therapeutic interactions with the horses, clients metaphorically discover and explore patterns of relating that have become problematic to them and how the opportunity to explore healthier ways of interacting with the world.

Horse Whisperer Kids & Therapeutic Farm

Horse Whisperer Kids & Therapeutic Farm is the only program of its kind in South Florida. The founder, Dr. Blair Barone, is a licensed psychologist trained at Harvard Medical School, offering evidence based best practice models to treatment.

We are located at a private and picturesque facility called The Lucky Horse Sanctuary.

The Lucky Horse Sanctuary is home to variety of therapy animals including a herd of 14 rescue- rehab horses, and other barn animals including sheep, lambs, goats, pigs, donkeys, exotic geese, ducks, chickens, rabbits, cats, dogs and alpaca; each animal has something to teach and experience with our clients.

Our program utilizes the evidence based EAGALA model (Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Association) & Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT).



Benefits of Animal Assisted Group Psychotherapy

Willingness

Willingness is an important step in the addiction recovery process. Working with horses is a perfect opportunity for clients to practice surrendering and willingness. That's because you don't have to love horses or even like them to benefit from equine assisted psychotherapy. You just need to be willing and open minded so that the horses can teach you something about yourself.

Emotional Awareness

Evidence based research has documented that horses increase human emotional intelligence. Horses can sense emotional states an individual may not even be aware of. Many people in recovery are often confused about and detached from their feelings. Because horses serve as emotional mirrors of human emotions, a horse's reaction allows clients to receive immediate feedback about their true emotional state.

Trust

Trust, something many in recovery struggle with, is one simple life skill that clients can experience while working with the horses. Horses are a powerful source of unconditional love and have no hidden agenda for doing so. Many in recovery may have strained personal relationships, difficulty trusting, and attaching to others yet able to develop strong, trusting bonds with the horses and other farm animals.

Problem Solving Skills

Since horses mimic body language and human emotions, to get the horse to complete a given task requires clients to figure out the best attitude and emotional state possible when appropriating the horse. This requires creativity, flexibility and thinking thru the consequences of one's actions.

Stress Reduction

Clinical Research has documented that just being in the presence of a horse for as little as 5 minutes, significantly reduces cortisol stress, blood pressure, decreased feelings of anxiety, depression, and changes brain wave patterns. All of the above can be extremely helpful to those going thru addiction recovery.

Healthy Boundaries

Many people in recovery have developed manipulative behaviors while using. Since horses are prey animals, they cannot be manipulated, dominated, or bullied. Without any words, horses make it clear when someone has crossed their boundaries. Being mindful of creating respectful boundaries with horses can be a helpful lesson in how to not cross the line with humans.

Communication Skills

Horses do not speak but are excellent communicators. Many addicts are not able to communicate their needs or ask for help. Teaching clients to learn how to understand horse communication and how to clearly and directly communicate back, can carry over into the addicts human relationships.

Empowerment

Alcohol and drug addictions can have a catastrophic impact on an addict's self-esteem. Overcoming the intimidation of working with a horse and tackling a new skill with the horse, helps to build confidence and can empower the addict to master other aspects of their recover

The Lucky Horse Sanctuary is a Certified Wildlife Habitat thru the National Wildlife Federation & a 501c3 nonprofit.